

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application.

The applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority and receipt of certified copies of all the priority document(s), and thanks the Examiner for determining that the drawings are acceptable.

The applicant also thanks the Examiner for providing information about recommended section headings. However, the applicant respectfully declines to add the headings. Section headings are not statutorily required for filing a non-provisional patent application under 35 USC 111(a), but are only guidelines that are suggested for applicant's use. (See Miscellaneous Changes in Patent Practice, Response to comments 17 and 18 (Official Gazette, August 13, 1996) [Docket No: 950620162-6014-02] RIN 0651-AA75 ("Section 1.77 is permissive rather than mandatory. ... [T]he Office will not require any application to comply with the format set forth in 1.77").

The Office action rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 15 is correspondingly amended herein.

The Office action rejects claims 1-5, 7-12, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Azima et al. (USP 6,332,029, hereinafter Azima). The applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1, upon which claims 2-8 and 16 depend, claims a driving unit for a loudspeaker assembly that includes a single coil suspended adjacent a magnet part that includes two permanent magnets that magnetically cooperate with the coil, an intermediate magnetic pole element sandwiched between the permanent magnets to form a single pole piece having a pole face that is magnetically directed towards an inner face of the coil, and two external magnetic pole elements that include pole faces that are magnetically directed towards an outer face of the coil.

Claim 9, upon which claims 10-15 depend, includes a similar limitation.

Azima does not teach a driving unit that includes two permanent magnets, a single intermediate pole element, and two external pole elements, as claimed in each of independent claims 1 and 9.

The Office action references Azima's FIG. 11a for teaching the elements of claims 1 and 9. The applicant notes, however, that Azima's FIG. 11a teaches two magnetically independent driver units that are operated in a push-pull arrangement (Azima, column 31, lines 34-39). That is, Azima teaches a pair of drive units, each of which includes a single permanent magnet 15, a single coil 13, and a single pair of pole elements 14. The independent nature of Azima's arrangement is further illustrated in Azima's FIGs. 11b and 11c, which include a single drive unit corresponding to one of the drive units of FIG. 11a.

Neither of the drive units corresponds to the applicant's claimed drive unit, and the combination of the two drive units does not correspond to the applicant's claimed drive unit. Individually, Azima's drive unit does not include two permanent magnets and does not include two external pole elements, as claimed in each of the applicant's independent claims. As a combination, the pair of drive units includes two independent coils and two intermediate pole pieces, rather than the single coil and single pole piece formed between the two permanent magnets, as claimed in each of the applicant's independent claims.

Because Azima fails to teach a driving unit that includes a single coil suspended adjacent a magnetic part that includes two permanent magnets, a single intermediate pole element, and two external pole elements, as claimed in each of the applicant's independent claims, the applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-5, 7-12, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Azima.

In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection(s) and/or rejection(s) of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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